

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A content switch managed by a network provider that routes packets to application providers in a computer based communications system using instructions recorded on a computer-readable storage medium, the storage medium comprising:

instructions that send a document to a parser;

instructions that fetch a schema associated with the packets, the schema containing routing rules, the routing rules providing a default action when the document does not match the routing rules;

instructions that validate the sent document according to the fetched schema;

instructions that pass the validated document to a routing instruction processor;

instructions that interpret the routing rules in the schema; and

instructions that use the interpreted routing rules to redirect the packets to a specified server, wherein:

~~wherein~~ each application provider defines switching policies, and

~~wherein~~—administrative domains of the content switch and application servers are separated.

2. (Currently Amended) The content switch as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

instructions that parse Extensible Markup Language (XML).

3. (Currently Amended) A method of carrying out content switching in application providers in a network provider of a computer-based communications system that uses instructions recorded on a computer-readable storage medium, the medium comprising:

instructions that add parsing capabilities to a content switch;

instructions that add routing information to a schema, the routing information providing a default action when a document does not match the routing information;

instructions that direct the content switch to fetch the schema to determine a routing action to be taken on packets associated with a document written according to the schema, wherein the determination is made by applying routing rules from the schema to elements parsed from the document; and

instructions that route the packets according to the determined routing action, wherein:

~~wherein~~ each application provider defines switching policies, and

~~wherein~~ administrative domains of the content switch and application servers are separated.

4. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in claim 3, further comprising:
instructions that use Extensible Markup Language (XML).

5. (Currently Amended) A system that routes traffic to application providers in a network provider of a computer based communications network using instructions recorded on a computer-readable storage medium, the medium comprising:

instructions that add parsing capabilities to a content switch;

instructions that add routing information to a schema, the routing information providing a default action when a document does not match the routing information;

instructions that direct the content switch to fetch the schema, interpret routing rules in a document written according to a schema associated with a packet and apply the routing rules to elements in the network; and

instructions that determine a routing action to be performed on packets from a packet flow associated with the document, wherein:

~~wherein~~ each application provider defines switching policies, and

~~wherein~~ administrative domains of the content switch and application servers are separated.

6. (Currently Amended) The system as recited in claim 5, further comprising:
instructions that parse Extensible Markup Language (XML).

7. (Currently Amended) A computer program schema comprising instructions stored on a computer-readable storage medium in a network provider of a computer based communications system, the medium comprising:

instructions that add parsing capabilities to a content switch;

instructions that add routing information to a schema, the routing information providing a default action when a document does not match the routing information;

instructions that direct the content switch to fetch the schema to provide routing actions to be taken on packets associated with a document written in the language of the schema; and

instructions that route the packets to application providers, wherein:

~~wherein~~ each application provider defines switching policies, and
~~wherein~~ administrative domains of the content switch and application
servers are separated.

8. (Currently Amended) The schema as defined in claim 7, further comprising:
instructions that allow a trusted customer of the network provider to define
switching policies.